

A
REVIEW
 OF THE
STATE
 OF THE
ENGLISH NATION.

Saturday, February 9. 1706.

I Am now upon the Abuses and Scandalous Branches of Credit in Trade, the more useful parts remain; if 'tis expected now from the Conclusion, that I should Draw a Plan of all the *Frauds of Trade*; I confess the vast Index beyond my Comprehension, and must remit it to the more Capacious Head of *Don Quevedo*, the next time he gets some Revelation at *Inferis*.

He that would do this, had best consider before he begin, into what Dreadful Chambers of Darkness he must search, and of what Monsters of Villany he must get his Information.

How must he Rake all the *Horse-Ponds of the Mint*, where Insolent Debtors raise War against the Laws, Bully the Magistrates, Defie the Parliament, stand Battle with

with the *Posse*, Drench the Officers, Debauch their own Principles, and Damn their Creditors?

How must he Rummage the *Verge*, the *Inns of Court*, and the *Rules*, where the more Capital Thieves of Trade shelter from the Law, and Laugh at the yet greater Villany among the Commissioners of Bankrupts, who spend large Estates, in finding out the shortest way to make no Dividends, while lesser Pick-Pockets, run greater Risques every Day in the Street, undergo the Discipline of the Pump and the Mob, and scarce arrive to the Happiness of a Retreat, in the Common-side of Newgate?

Whither shall we go for Descriptions, and the Histories of *Trade-Pirates*, that have Rov'd the Ocean of Trade, to all the vast

Inlets and Gulphs, in the most Remote Angles of *Barratry, Cheat, Presumptive Credit, and Design'd Rupture*; at last you find the House shut up, *Lord ha' Mercy, and a Cross* set on the Door, and the Man's thrown out upon that *Dunghil of the Nations Nuisance*, the Fleet; and from thence, as the City *Catacomb* of Carcasses, he's remov'd to the Army or Navy, has the Favour to be Starv'd in *Flanders*, and so Dye in the Bed of Honour.

And who that can reckon up the Thousands of this Nation that Expiate their Trade-Crimes with their Blood, that are remov'd from the Compter to the Camp, from the Goal to the General Rendevous, that are Advanc'd from the Handicraft to the Halbert, and from the Shop to the Ships, can deny the Gentility of a Tradesman?

Nor indeed can the Superiority of Trade be Disputed here, since a broken Tradesman makes a whole Gentleman, and the Sword and long-Wig, look as well on the Draper's Prentice, when he's got into a Commission, as on the Eldest Sons of Sir *Th————*, and Sir *E————*, that claims it by Inheritance, from their Heroick Ancestors.

Nay, if you were to ask the Enemy, they would certainly give it for the Broken Tradesman; for if the Desperate Man is always the worst to Engage with, it must certainly follow, that when these Men come into the Field, they lay about them like Furies, since they generally Fight not to Live and Conquer, but to Dye and end their Misfortunes; not for a *Commission* but for a *Dismission* out of the World, where they had more Danger before of being Starv'd, than they can have here of being Kill'd; this makes them wholly unconcern'd about Events, and Fight like Dragons, from the meer Principles of Despair, according to the Old Verse of,

*is'bacares he so Dye Sir,
That can't tell how to Live.*

But, Pardon me, Gentlemen, and my Brethren in Misfortunes, that Languish under Barbarities and Severities of Merciless Creditors, and of strain'd and ill

Extended Laws, and have Patience with me, to run thro' a short course of Censure, with those *whose Scandals you bear*; I shall in time, *and am hastning to do*, come to lay open your Case to the World, perhaps in Colours it has not been yet Painted in, and show our Governours, how many Honest Men they Ruine, to one Knave they Correct.

But before I come to your Case, I must ask Pardon to tell the World, how Honest Men come to break, and what fills our few Places of Refuge with Unhappy Families, Men of Good beginnings, Honest Designs, Dilligent Endeavours, and large Trades.

Will you ask me how these come to Break; give me Leave to Answer first Negatively,

1. Not want of Trade, and I believe what I have said on that Head will be made out; that more Break by too much Trade, than too little.

2. Asking my Lord *H—sham's* Pardon for the Expression, not the lowness of Trade in General, of which I believe not a Moyety we Complain of, nor the Superiority of the *Dutch* over us in Trade, of which I believe not a Word. —

3. Nor is it the Indentures made in Trade, by the Lots of our Ships to the *French*, Default of our Convoys, Cruisers, and Captains of Ships; tho' some ill Natur'd things might be said on that Head.

4. Nor is it the stop on the *Spanish* Trade, which if we have not made our selves Amends for, by way of *Jamaica*, or directly by Force, on the Continent of *America*, is our own Faults; and we have no Body to Blame for it, but our selves.

5. Nor is it the Deficiencies of Public Funds, the Non-Payments of Transport Service, &c. The Melancholy Retrospects of the Nations unavoidable straights, before more Direct Methods could be arriv'd to, tho' some Men have fallen upon this Account.

But if I am ask'd, Why Honest Tradesmen are Ruin'd, and Undesigning Men come to Destruction in Trade, the Answer is short; because Knaves run away with

with their Money, Knaves break first, and pull Honest Men down with them; the present Grievance is therefore, if possible, to Punish Fraudulent Bankrupts, and thereby prevent Honest Mens Breaking.

As to the Justice of our Law, that makes no Difference between an Honest Man and a Knave, that shows no Mercy to either, but Punishes him that is Ruin'd by a Rogue, with the same Severity, as it does the Rogue that Ruin'd him. I have a great Quarrel at the Title, and would have it call'd an Act to Punish Men, for being in ill Company; for to say all Men that Break are Knaves and Villains, because some that Break are so, is as Pre-

posterous, as to say, no Englishmen are Christians, because some of them are Atheists.

The Frauds, the Cheats, the Conspiracies of Villainous Men to get into Debt, and to Rob their Honest and Innocent Neighbours, are innumerable; and tho' perhaps I may in time Touch some of them, I do not pretend to give you the Black List of the Towns *Piskins*, but shall enter a little into the Methods taken by such, and the Destructive, Ruinous Influences they have upon Trade, in Blowing up Honest Men, Blasting Credit, Ruining Families, and rendring Trade Dangerous and Unsafe.

MISCELLANEA.

THE following Letter was sent the Author from *Hereford*, but as some proper Observations, seem Natural to the present Prospect of Affairs; I think it's not at all unsuitable to the Occasion to insert it.

Mr. Review,

HAVING your Print, Entitled the REVIEW, constantly sent every Post, for about 12 Months last Past, (and so by the by) an encourager of your Undertakings, I cannot but think it proper, to Acquaint you of an Observation, I made in my Journey to the City of *Hereford*, (the like I think not to be seen in any City in England,) I found Her Majesty's Speech unto this Parliament, Curiously Wrote, in a very fine Character, and these two Paragraphs viz.) I will always Affectionately Support and Countenance the Church of England, as by Law Establish'd. I will inviolably Maintain the Toleration, all Wrote in GOLD LETTERS very Curious, and the whole fix'd in a Frame of solid Silver, and hung up in a Tradesman Shop; I was much pleas'd with it, and enquir'd what the Person was, who kept the Shop, and was Answer'd, he was a Protestant Dissenter. Sir, I shall leave it

to you, as to any Observation, only thought fit to give you mine.

I am, Sir though unknown,

your Humble Servant,

I have often, and I hope effectually Argued, from Circumstances I think very moving, that the Dissenters in England, if it were left to their own Choice, would resolve the Government of this Nation into the hands of the Church; I have prov'd they can do no otherwise, without acting against their own Interest, and contradicting their Reason, that they cannot only not be Wise Men, but they cannot be in their Sences upon any other Foundation.

I deduc'd this Conclusion, from Premises Rationally form'd upon their own Discording Circumstances, and the distance between their several Interests; which if I may judge rightly, prepares them rather to submit even by choice, to the Dominion, of the Church of England Party, than of one another.

From whence also, I drew Arguments of the Security and Safety of the Church, as to the Pretended Dangers of the Church,
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